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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/554,631	10/25/2005	Roald T. Lokken	2003UR027	9176
7590 Gerald D Malpass Jr ExxonMobil Upstream Research Company Corp Urc SW348 PO Box 2189 Houston, TX 77252-2189				
EXAMINER				
MAYO, TARAL				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
3671				
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
10/08/2008		PAPER		

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

### Office Action Summary

**Application No.**

10/554,631

**Applicant(s)**

LOKKEN ET AL.

**Examiner**

TARA L. MAYO

**Art Unit**

3671

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 January 2008.  
2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.  
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-23 is/are pending in the application.  
4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.  
5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.  
6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-23 is/are rejected.  
7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.  
8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.  
10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 25 October 2005 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).  
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:  
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  
2) ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)  
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/5508)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 20080611  
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_  
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application  
6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**DETAILED ACTION**

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

3. Claims 1 through 3, 6 through 19 and 21 through 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Horton, III (U.S. Patent No. 5,722,797) in view of Meyer-Haake (U.S. Patent No. 4,217,848).

Horton, III '797, as best seen in Figure 1, shows a floating spar structure (10) attached to a heave plate (30), said floating structure including a deck (34). Horton, III '797 discloses the invention substantially as claimed. Horton, III '797 fails to teach the step of vertically positioning the floating structure with the heave plate along a common vertical axis.

Meyer-Haake '848 teaches a method of installing a floating installation wherein a plate (12) is structurally attached to a floating structure (16) at an offshore site (see Figs. 1-5d) along a common vertical axis. It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the method disclosed by Horton, III '797 such that it would include the step of vertically positioning the floating structure with the heave plate along a common vertical axis as suggested by Meyer-Haake '848. The motivation would have been to reduce the complication and cost involved in assembling the structure on land and then transporting the same to an offshore site.

4. Claims 4, 5 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Horton, III (U.S. Patent No. 5,722,797) in view of Meyer-Haake (U.S. Patent No. 4,217,848) as applied to claim 3 above, and further in view of Haselton (U.S. Patent No. 3,986,471).

The combination of Horton, III '797 and Meyer-Haake '848 fails to teach a variable buoyancy heave plate.

Haselton '471 teaches a variable buoyancy heave plate (26). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to further modify the method and structure taught by the combination of Horton, III '797 and Meyer-Haake '848 such that at least one of the heave plates would be of the variable buoyancy type as taught by Haselton '471. The motivation would have been to include means for controlling the heave, pitch and roll of the structure.

***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to TARA L. MAYO whose telephone number is (571)272-6992. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Thomas B. Will can be reached on 571-272-6998. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/TARA L MAYO/  
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3671

tlm  
03 October 2008

**Application Number****Application/Control No.**

10/554,631

**Examiner**

TARA L. MAYO

**Applicant(s)/Patent under  
Reexamination**

LOKKEN ET AL.

**Art Unit**

3671